

Meeting Notes  
Tenant Work Group  
Tuesday, January 6, 2009  
6:30-8:30pm  
Executive Conference Room  
101 Monroe Street  
Rockville, MD 20850

Work Group Members in attendance: Matt Losak (Chair), Chuck Short, Zack Fried, Rick Nelson, Dale Tibbitts, Guy Johnson, Shaun Pharr

Via Conference Call: Maureen Ross, Parag Khandhar, Alice Wilkerson, Harrietta Kelly

Staff participants: Patrice Cheatham, DHCA; Megan Moriarty, IMPACT Silver Spring

Agenda

- Call to Order
- Review of previous meeting's minutes
- Seniors and Special Needs Committee
- Committee Work and Plans
- Other business/Chair report
- Public Comment

Notes:

Matt Losak called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. The previous meeting's minutes were reviewed and no group members had comments.

There was discussion about the formation of a committee to focus on Seniors and Special Needs. Maureen Ross explained that seniors have different issues than regular tenants and that a separate committee is needed to fully address the challenges seniors face. Alice Wilkerson agreed that seniors have different concerns and said that her office frequently receives calls from seniors. There was discussion on the merits of creating a sub-committee or charging each committee to include these issues in their analysis. The group decided to create a separate committee, with Maureen serving as chair. Alice agreed to participate and Chuck offered to connect Maureen with appropriate staff at the County. Maureen will present the objectives of the committee at the next meeting and if other members have input, they can email them to her.

Shaun Pharr introduced himself to the group and explained that once Zack leaves AOBA in February, he will be filling in for Lesa Hoover.

The group moved on to the topic of committee work plans and discussed how the subgroups should move forward. Before the next meeting, the chairs will convene their committees to prioritize the issues under consideration and present a work plan at the Jan. 27 meeting. The members discussed the difficulty of defining success for a committee's work or an end point for analysis and research. The group agreed the work plans should be realistic and keep in mind the short nature of the group and that their recommendations to

the County Executive will only be the first step in an ongoing process. How to continue the group's work will be discussed during the recommendations phase.

The group agreed each work plan should contain:

1. Committee objectives
2. List of priority issues
3. For each issue, an explanation of what research will need to be done with specific tasks outlined and time frames
4. For each issue, a plan for analyzing the compiled information, again with specific tasks and time frames
5. For each issue, a proposed outcome and/or product of the research and analysis

The full group will then consider each work plan on Jan. 27. During that meeting the group will also discuss how to keep the full group informed about the committees' progress. Dale requested input from the group about his committee's issues (Code Update and Enforcement) and members clarified the bullet points. In general, for each issue the committee should identify applicable codes (both State and County) and then determine whether the codes are adequate and are being sufficiently enforced. The group agreed it should consider the code that applies to renters both in apartment buildings and single-family homes. The issue "HOC allocations" was moved to the Tenant Security and Affordability Committee and the Code Update and Enforcement Committee will add "how foreclosures are affecting renters" to its list.

Matt gave his Chair's report and asked the group to consider how to proceed regarding the Just Cause Eviction legislation proposed by State Delegate Heather Mizeur. The options included: moving quickly to review it and make a recommendation to the County Executive; letting the appropriate committee review it; or writing a brief with no specific recommendation. A majority of the group agreed that the legislation is indeed important, but would like more time to research and analyze the issue using the committee process before taking any action. Matt clarified that individual members may give testimony before the legislature, but only as private citizens, not as work group members.

In other business, Megan Moriarty reported that two public meetings have been scheduled: March 18, Up County Regional Center; and March 30, East County Regional Center. Megan will check to make sure those dates do not conflict with other County meetings. At the next meeting an ad hoc committee will be formed to plan these sessions. Chuck Short recommended the group consider doing focus groups with hard to reach communities based on the outcome of the first two meetings.

Alice reported that her office does have two interns for the spring semester that can help with the group's survey needs. She is still compiling options for the survey and will have an update at the next meeting.

Matt reported on the status of the website - Megan has provided the necessary information and County staff is working on it.

There was no public comment. Matt adjourned the meeting at 8:30pm.

**Upcoming Meetings:**

Tuesday, January 27, 6:30 pm., County Executive's conference room

Wednesday, February 11, 6:30 pm., County Executive's conference room

Tuesday, February 24, 6:30 pm., County Executive's conference room